



## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **TRANS-LAKE WASHINGTON PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE NORTH BELLEVUE COMMUNITY SENIOR CENTER, BELLEVUE OCTOBER 11, 2000 — 4:00 TO 7:00 P.M.**

#### **WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW**

Pat Serie, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting with a review of the agenda. The goal for the meeting would be to review and discuss the first level screening recommendations of the Technical Committee. There were no major changes to the agenda.

#### **FIRST LEVEL SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS**

Jeff Peacock, Parametrix, reviewed the first level screening recommendations of the project team and the Technical Committee, as discussed at the October 4, 2000, Technical Committee meeting. Jeff reiterated that the first level screening was a comparison of modal alternatives only, and no comparisons or rankings are construed to carry meaning across modes. Comments from this meeting will be conveyed to both the Technical and Executive Committees.

Each of the alternatives and the associated ratings assigned by the project team and the Technical Committee was described and explained. The discussion and points follow.

##### **A1 – No Action**

This alternative is assumed to be carried forward. It was suggested that the description relating to environmental impacts include the word 'existing,' so that it would read 'avoid, minimize, or mitigate *existing* or increasing impacts.'

##### **B1 – Minimum footprint**

The minimum footprint is similar to the no action alternative except that the replacement of the floating portion of the bridge in the no action alternative makes no provisions for pullouts. A no action alternative would also include TDM and TSM for better performance. The minimum footprint, in addition to TDM, TSM, and some increase in shoulders, would include bike and pedestrian facilities.

B1 and B2 look similar. Since this doesn't seem to meet the purpose and need, it might be better to spend resources in the second level screening looking at more viable options.

### **B2 – HOV lanes**

The HOV access description should be modified to indicate the level of access assumed. The width shows significant expansion over the existing width, assuming full design standards.

### **B3 – HOV and GP lanes**

The effectiveness of the bridge portion in this option is very good, but the impact on the entire system is not clear. This may create backups onto I-5 and I-405, but it may also relieve backups onto those systems as a result of the overcrowded bridge. The demand induced by an expanded facility may not result in real 'relief.' The committee should seek information about potentially inducing demand. It was noted that only small operational improvements to I-5 are assumed which may include widening at limited locations. No large scale projects on I-5 are planned.

Statements about cut-through traffic and arterial street traffic increases and decreases should be clarified in this and the other alternatives to indicate causes and effects. Increased traffic in the Montlake area is a concern.

### **B4 – GP lanes**

This solution is highly unlikely to be the ultimate solution, but if left in may have the effect of making other poor solutions look good in comparison. There was some dispute as to whether this ought to remain to satisfy FTA's need for full review. It may be premature to assume that the public does not want GP lanes.

### **B5 – Bus only lanes**

The difference between B5 and B2 is signage, and they also have differences in performance.

### **B6 – HOV tunnel**

The feasibility of tunnels will be looked at for all other options as well. This was therefore combined with B2.

### **B7 – New freeway and bridge**

The difference between B7 and C4 should be clarified.

### **B8 – New four lane arterial bridge**

No comments.

### **B9 – Close SR 520 interchanges**

No comments.

## **B10 – Modify HOV operations**

No comments.

## **B11 – Lane conversions**

Adding capacity across the lake may induce a significant demand on 520 as a move back to the ‘stuck in traffic’ concept of triple convergence. These warnings should be heeded here.

## **High Capacity Transit options**

### **C1 – HCT in SR 520 corridor**

It seems like C1 is more effective than C2, because it connects major employment centers more directly. Would the effectiveness rating be influenced by the technology used for HCT, and therefore a  $\frac{3}{4}$  rating may be more than warranted?

### **C2 – HCT in I-90 corridor**

Lane revisions on I-90 are not being considered as part of this option yet. The conditions of the 1976 MOA are not being met, which called for conversion to 2-way transit. The decision on I-90 should be part of the EIS, and the effects of one corridor on the other should be characterized. Additional capacity on I-90 as a result of lane reconfiguration should also be considered.

### **C3 – Mid-lake corridor**

The route is described / pictured to connect only downtown Seattle and downtown Bellevue. Extensions should be noted in the description.

### **C4.1, C4.2 – New north-lake corridor**

It may be incorrect to assume that the north-lake crossing would not sufficiently serve populations. There are a significant number of people who commute from to and from the north ends of both sides of the lake.

## **Other alternatives**

### **D1 – Increase effectiveness investment in TDM**

Studies in New Jersey demonstrate how land use in a transportation model may work. Land use should be incorporated into the TDM proposals for the project, especially since Trans-Lake Study TDM proposals advocated commute trip reductions even though 85% of trips are not related to commutes.

A resource library for committee members should be made available, and TDM proposals in other cities may be a large part of that.

Effects and environmental impacts of land-use alternatives deserve their own rating, especially as it is not traditionally considered as part of WSDOT projects.

## **E1 – Passenger ferry**

Is there a possibility that the ferry will be brought back into the Trans-Lake Project for review after next year's Sound Transit study?

## **E2 – Arterial connections**

Arterial improvements will not be considered as a stand-alone alternative, though arterial performance will be considered as the options progress to more detailed design.

## **DISCUSSION OF CURRENT PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Rob Fellows outlined the value analysis report released at the end of August 2000, and the resulting recommendations for schedule acceleration adopted by the Executive Committee on September 27, 2000, and approved by the Washington Transportation Commission on September 20, 2000.

The Value Analysis team made three basic recommendations:

1. Accelerate the EIS schedule.
2. Pursue aggressive project management strategies.
3. Consider financing and project delivery options early in the process.

The project team feels it's a better schedule. Outreach on the project needs to be extensive. The resource agencies need to be approached for buy-in to the schedule, as much of the EIS process will depend on their comfort with the project.

Comments from the committee about the schedule acceleration included:

Inclusion of GP lanes for further study will elicit a long list of demands from the neighborhoods, and any attempt to shortchange the neighborhoods on this would prompt a lawsuit.

The schedule acceleration shows that the community and the project are ready to move along, and this action is commended. The representatives on the committee should be responsible for communicating with their constituents about the projects, to bring issues to the forefront as soon as possible.

## **COMMUNITY DESIGN PROCESS**

Jeff Peacock briefed the committee on the community design process. Three workshops will be held in each of four geographical locations in the corridor. Each group representing a geographical area will remain the same throughout the process, and will require individuals who have the time and the interest in working on them.

The first set of workshops, to be held in mid-November 2000, will look at values, principles, and measures of success of the community, as well as an introduction of the work done to date. The information generated from the workshops will be incorporated into the work of the engineering and design teams, and will also be characterized for the three committees. Jeff emphasized that decisions will not be made in the workshops. The workshops will be held in the Montlake, Portage Bay – Roanoke, Medina, and I-405/SR520 interchange neighborhoods.

Comments and questions by the committee included:

- Will Eastside businesses and employees be included in the workshops?
- How far from the freeway are the ‘the closely impacted areas’ in the corridor?
- Will the workshops be video/audio taped?

Jeff encouraged the committee members and community leaders to attend the open houses at different geographical locations to get a sense of the issues in different areas. The workshop participation will be limited to those invited in an effort to keep the group at a manageable size. The committee was asked to provide names of candidates to work on the community design workshops to Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues, by Monday, October 16, 2000.

## **EARLY ACTION STATUS UPDATE**

Daryl Wendle, Parametrix, and Dave McCormack, WSDOT, presented an update on the early actions recommended by the Trans-Lake Study Committee. They also announced that WSDOT-OUM won a federal grant to reduce environmental impacts and improve communities through TDM measures as part of the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program. The grant application was submitted in partnership with 1000 Friends of Washington, Sound Transit, Puget Sound Regional Council, King County, and the Cities of Seattle, Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland. Provided that the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate Appropriations Committees approve the allocations, \$450,000 will be available for this study.

Virginia Gunby, 1000 Friends of Washington, voiced excitement about the opportunity to combine transportation systems policies and land-use policies. This potentially will be a starting point for a dialogue among businesses, employees, and communities to do work on issues that often do not surface until projects face litigation. The dialogue may help prevent that litigation, and will certainly help WSDOT understand how to work within communities.

The PSRC is fully behind the study, having allocated funding in case the grant did not come through, and the Washington Transportation Commission has also voiced its support. The grant will last for three years.

Dave McCormack updated the committee on early actions including the ramp metering installed on the Eastside started in September 2000, and compression brake signs implemented in the summer of 2000. The ramp metering has increased speeds by 10-20 mph in the corridor during the peak period, especially after the meters were installed at 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Throughput increases

for both people and vehicles do not yet show concrete results, and these will be studied in the next three months. A question was raised about whether the Montlake area would benefit from increased ramp metering, especially in the westbound direction. Dave stated that this would be the next focus of study for ramp metering operations.

Incident response teams for the SR 520 corridor have also been funded, increasing service times to include weekend afternoons and midday patrols during the weekdays. No parking restrictions will also be posted, giving the State Patrol more latitude in getting disabled vehicles out of the corridor more quickly.

WSDOT is also working with King County on developing disaster readiness plans for I-5, and those mitigation plans will also be applied to SR 520. Mark Weed commended WSDOT for its response to the lane shutdown in August as a result of the barge accident.

## **SECOND LEVEL SCREENING CRITERIA**

John Perlic, Parametrix, reviewed the second level screening criteria. A new version of the screening process and criteria memo will be available by the next week. There were not significant changes to the second level screening process, and some changes were made to make the process clearer. He noted again that the alternatives were categorized by mode through the first level screening. The 'first step' of second level screening is now described as the 'modal alternative definition and analysis,' where the modal alternatives will be evaluated for further combination into the multi-modal alternatives. Effectively, some of the alternatives which pass the first level may be dropped as the multi-modal alternatives are developed.

Questions and comments raised include:

- The second level screening will be somewhat of an iterative process.
- There are no references to the flow of goods and services in the second level criteria. It is suggested that this be explicitly stated in the second level criteria.
- How will ESA issues that are now faced by the I-405 Study be brought to the forefront for discussion in the Trans-Lake Project?
- A briefing on the I-405 project very soon will be helpful.
- When will mitigation be discussed?

Four events on the horizon could affect the Trans-Lake Project: I-745, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation report, a 2/10<sup>th</sup> percent county sales tax increase, and Seattle Mayor Paul Schell's transportation plan. A request was made to brief the committees on the outcome and effects of these events on the Trans-Lake Washington Project by early December.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Consider opportunities to video/audiotape the community design workshops.
- Email project staff list to the Advisory Committee.
- Provide briefing of implication of election results, blue ribbon commission results, and Seattle Mayor Paul Schell's transportation plan in early December.

## **MEETING HANDOUTS**

1. Agenda
2. Preliminary Definition of Alternatives for First Level Screening, September 28, 2000
3. First Level Screening Evaluation Results – Technical Steering Committee Working Draft, September 28, 2000
4. EIS Schedule Acceleration Options (presentation)
5. Value Analysis Team Schedule Acceleration Recommendations (chart)
6. Draft Community Design Workshop Schedule
7. Tech Memo – Alternatives Analysis – Draft Screening Process and Criteria, September 20, 2000
8. Building a Community Strategy for Land Use and Transportation Demand Management
9. Update on public involvement activities
10. Meeting schedule

## **MEETING ATTENDEES**

### *Committee Members*

#### Present

X	Jean	Amick
X	Deborah	Andrews
	Hans	Aschenbach
	Allison	Beltz
X	Barbara	Culp
	Bob	Dent
X	Bertha	Eades
	Dan	Gatchet
X	Virginia	Gunby
X	Mark	Hallenbeck
X	Fred	Hart
	Jim	Hill
X	Gregory	Hill
	Linda	Holman
	Peter	Hurley
X	Kingsley	Joneson
X	Jean	Leed

	Jim	MacIsaac
X	Elizabeth	Newstrum
	Nina	Odell
X	Janet	Ray
X	James	Reckers, Jr.
	John	Resha
	Ronald	Sheck
X	Claudia	Stelle
X	Bob	Tate
	Thomas B.	Tochterman
X	Eugene	Wasserman
X	Mark	Weed
	Rich	White
X	Roland	White
	John	Wyble

### *Project Staff*

Pat Serie, EnviroIssues  
 Jeff Peacock, Parametrix  
 John Perlic, Parametrix  
 Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill  
 Rob Fellows, WSDOT  
 Dave McCormack, WSDOT  
 Paul Hezel, EnviroIssues

### *Other Attendees*

Philip Grega

PJH